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VIENNA -- The wording "Frohe Weihnachten" (Merry Christmas) is seen at a Christmas market in front of the townhall in Vienna. (AFP PHOTO)



Repsol of Spain and CAP NV sign landmark offshore energy exploration and development agreement

Yesterday morning in the boardroom of the Dr. Edward Cheung Center for Innovation, Director of Compania Arubano di Petroleo (CAP NV) Armando Curet, and Repsol Director of Exploration for Northern Latin America and Caribbean, Joseba Murillas signed an agreement for seismic exploration and development of hydrocarbon reserves (oil or gas) in Aruba territorial waters. The Spanish energy giant Repsol has a number of projects in the Caribbean; Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana, Venezuela and Colombia.

Additionally signing this agreement were Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman along with Minister of Finance, Communications, Energy and Utilities, Mike de Meza and Minister of Economic & Social Affairs and Culture, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar.

The contract is broken into four phases. Initial two phases entail general than more specific seismic exploration of territorial waters for deposits. Repsol will assume all financial risk for the exploratory process. If findings indicate underwater drilling will prove worthwhile, they will move ahead under the supervision of CAP NV with an exploratory well. The specified area is in excess of 14,000 square kilometers and ranges in depth from 50 to 3000 meters. The contract allows an exploration phase limited to eight years.

Repsol has already conducted a preliminary environmental impact study, which was presented to Prime Minister Eman yesterday morning. A more detailed study with specific recommendations is promised. Mr. Murilla reports Repsol is in a position to begin their first seismic exploration within the first six months of next year, advancing to 3D seismic exploration in 2014, with the expectation to begin



Repsol and CAP sign



Minister de Meza signs

drilling operation in 2016-17, depending on the water depth where they find the most promising indications.

Continued on page 3



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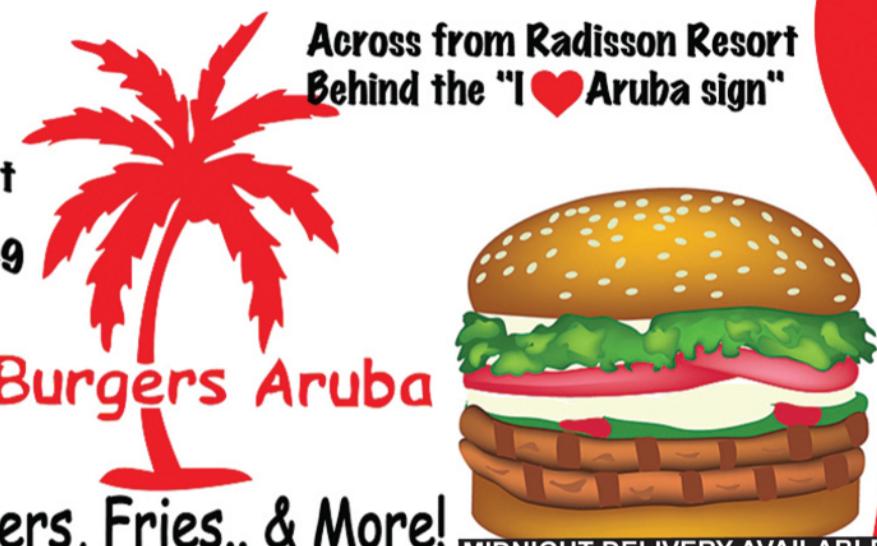
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The second annual Small Business Week 2012, held recently, was a smashing success, according to organizers. More than 500 persons attended the different lecture sessions, workshops and seminars. These were all gratis and geared toward stimulating the establishment of micro businesses, small and medium size businesses on the island. During the Small Business Week many entrepreneurs were in attendance as they, too, were interested in the information although they already have established businesses.

The Ministry of Economics is the brainchild of the Small Business Week program as a support mechanism for small and medium size businesses. Small businesses are responsible for between 60% and 70% of the island's GDP. The go-

vernment is intent on guaranteeing that there are small businesses but also, and in particular, that these are of good quality and provide excellent service and quality products, and good financial planning for the solvency of these businesses.

For those who wish to review the information received during the week, and for those who were unable to attend, all the presentations are now available online at: www.smallbusinessweek.com. Simply click on "Program SB-Week 2012" on the right panel on the page and the presentation will be available for download.

Explore the different presentations, replete with basic information regarding entrepreneurship, as well as important data and valuable tips.

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Government supports Persons with Limitations' Treaty

The Platform for People with Limitations, better known as the PPL, was held here in the Aruba Marriott Resort, where the very first seminar titled "Creating a Community Accessible to All" was conducted. The Minister of Social Affairs, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar had the honor of opening the seminar. The seminar presented several relevant points and interesting developments with respect to persons with limitations in our community.

Immediately following the opening remarks by the Minister, Ricky Hoek of ATHA elaborated on the Treaty of the Rights of Persons with Limitations on Aruba. The purpose of



the Treaty is to promote, protect and guarantee the enjoyment of all the human rights and fundamental liberties for all incapacitated persons, based on equality and respect of their inherent dignity.

Aruba has chosen 5 areas on which to work and considers this a national and integral plan: work and the quality of life, socialization, health and rehabilitation, infrastructure and transportation, and the awareness of communication. The intention is to form an alliance of cooperation with 14 institutions, which are: Asociacion di Hubentud na Aruba (ATHA), Stichting Verstandig Gehandicapten Aruba (SVGA), Fundacion pa Esnan cu Problema di Oido (FEPO), Fundacion di esnan Visualmente Incapacita (FAVI), Fun-



dacion Arubano pa esnan Invalido (FUNARI), Stichting Ambiente Feliz (SAF), Asociacion di Mayor Sonrisa, Fundacion Biba Bou Guia, Special Olympics, Stichting Ambiente Nabo (SAN), Fundacion Mi Por, Fundacion Sina Mi Paso

deficiencies noted. There are four factors. The factors in 2010 are: accidents 29.8%, congenital inheritance 29.4%, old age 17.6% and diseases 11.6%.

During the seminar, they submitted special recognition to two persons who played a pivotal role in the development of the program. One was, Ramon Todd Dandare who translated the Treaty into Papiamento, and Ben Broekman. Broekman was the person who initiated the PPL in 2007.

At the end of the seminar, the Department of Social Affairs, in a historical moment, signed the Agreement of Cooperation between the 14 organizations. They also took the opportunity to launch the new PPL website. This is certainly an important step in our community, and especially for the incapacitated. The community will be made much more aware and conscious to ensure that everyone is part of our community, including our incapacitated!



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Repsol of Spain and CAP NV sign landmark offshore energy ...

Continued from page 1

"In case of discovery, we could expect the first production in Aruba beyond 2020," explained Mr. Murilla. "This is of course an exploratory venture, with high geological risk. We are extremely pleased...we have developed a high degree of corporate trust with CAP and Aruba's administration. We definitely think this is going to be a great venture."

Mr. Curet expressed his satisfaction in reaching this agreement with a reliable, solid company with the financial foundation and expertise to conduct the prospecting and exploratory development of energy reserves in Aruba's territorial waters. The ramifications of finding large gas reserves in Aruba's waters would be far reaching in not only providing cheap energy for the island, but it would also constitute a major economical pillar. Diversification of Aruba's economy beyond tourism has always been a primary goal of the present administration. He expressed his sincere belief in the success of this project.

Prime Minister Eman cre-

dited Minister Mike de Meza with pursuing and obtaining a successful arrangement with Repsol. "This could have a huge impact on the social and economic development of Aruba in the future...thank you to all of those who have made this possible... Though my focus is elsewhere, I see the importance of this agreement and Repsol's contribution to Aruba...We hope the way in which exploration is done would show innovation and guarantee the environment of Aruba, this is very important in this process."

The PM also hoped to see the funds manifested by a successful venture be wisely invested and deployed to continue to benefit all the population. "We have seen such ventures in other nations result in a poor translation of the wealth to the citizens of the country...we are looking to the example of other countries



Minister Hooyboer Winklaar signs

where funds have been managed in a very responsible and sustainable way for the society."

Some details revealed during the Q & A was exploration will be conducted beyond a one and a half mile buffer zone around Aruba and in no waters less than 50 meters deep. The actual cost and completion of the first exploratory drilling platform and its possible success is dependent on the water depth. The area of principal in-

terest is deep water, subject to floating structures. During the discovery phase, most equipment and personnel will be imported.

Mr. Curet explained that Aruba's share from a successful project consists of three elements. A fixed percentage at the very beginning, a production payment, made to CAP NV. A part of the energy harvested will remain with Repsol to recover their costs. A share of the profits of the remaining energy will be paid to Aruba; the formula dependent on the expenditures and income. Repsol will also have to pay standard

profit taxes as any company doing business in Aruba. Profit shares could range from 41% to 78% depending on various elements in the final development and implementation of a successful project.

Minister Hooyboer-Winklaar pointed out that the willingness of a company such as Repsol to invest at least 150 million dollars for the realization of just a single drilling platform indicates high confidence in Aruba. "This underscores the appetite for investment is high in Aruba... we are pleased to see there is a trend towards extreme confidence in our economy."

Rosalie Klein

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EARLY BIRD SPECIAL



“50” donated to the Eben-Haëzer Church by artist Waldy Simson

Aruba Commemorates World AIDS Day

Recently, Aruban artist Waldy Simson donated his work titled “50” to the Eben-Haëzer Moravian church of Aruba. The church is situated at the Pastor Hendrikstraat in San Nicolas.

“50” is a tiffany-style hanging lamp of leaded and colored glass. Simson created it in connection with his 50th anniversary as a working artist.

The subject of “50” is “The Lamb of God.” It is a four-panel lamp comprised of 176 pieces of glass in green, green/white, blue, blue/white, yellow, brown/yellow and orange/white, measuring 38.5 x 38.5 x 48 cm. He began working on the project in



June 2011.

Next on his schedule, the artist will host a solo exhibition from July 28th till August 4th in Suriname, as part of his participation at Carifesta 2013.

ORANJESTAD -- On the first of December, the whole world took time out to commemorate World AIDS Day with different ceremonies and events. People from all walks of life joined together with interest groups to demonstrate solidarity in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. This also took place here on Aruba. On this important day, the Aruba Minister of Public Health expressed words of strength for those diagnosed with HIV/ AIDS and at the same time congratulated organizations working on behalf of HIV/ AIDS patients. The organizations are: ‘E Faro,’ the Public Health Service, UNAIDS and the Women’s Club



of Aruba. They were praised for their efforts to inform and educate the community regarding HIV/ AIDS and for the daily support they give to patients and their families.

The Minister expressed that...“no one needs to die from HIV/AIDS...” and that we must unite to achieve zero mortality from HIV/AIDS. Some of the biggest advances in the pharmaceutical industry has been in the area of HIV/ AIDS, with the result that patients, who take their medication, are considered to have a chronic disease but need not die from the disease. They can now live with it. The newest medications can now provide a 97% protection against the transmission of HIV/AIDS, which is a gigantic accomplishment.

The Caribbean follows Africa with the highest number of HIV/AIDS cases in the world. In the region, Aruba is one of the few exceptions, where 90% of patients have access to treatment and is working diligently to increase our prevention services and programs.

In Aruba between 1986 and 2012 there were 555 cases of HIV/AIDS registered, and 57 registered deaths. At the moment there are 110 persons receiving treatment for HIV/AIDS in Aruba. The last figures for mortality indicate

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Another successful Car Extravaganza from Stern Motors



Stern Motors Manager and a happy customer

Stern Motors GM David Theysen expressed extreme satisfaction in consumer responds to their annual Car Extravaganza on Saturday, December 1. A division of Jolly Holding, they offered brand new Chevrolets, Nissan, KIA and Suzuki automobiles at highly discounted rates, plus a very large and varied inventory of used cars.

Several windshields were marked "Sold" as happy customers sat with smiling Stern Motors staff



CMB team offers service with a smile

to prepare the paperwork.

Loan representatives of several local banks, Caribbean Mercantile, Aruba Bank, and RBC Bank, were on hand to assist in quick financing for a new family car.

the corner, quite a few happy islanders are going to find a very nice surprise from Santa in the driveway this year!

Rosalie Klein

With Christmas around



Stern Team ready to make a deal

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US Senate fails to ratify UN treaty on disabilities

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US Senate yesterday failed to ratify the UN convention protecting the rights of the disabled, a treaty whose approval would create no change in US law but encountered Republican resistance.

Lawmakers voted 61-38 in favor of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, but fell short of the two-thirds majority needed for ratification.

President Barack Obama's signature would have made the United States the 127th country to ratify the convention, which was first adopted December 13, 2006 by the UN General Assembly.

The treaty was largely symbolic for the United States in that it codifies in interna-

tional law many of the rights already afforded under the Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA), the historic US law passed in 1990.

In recent months, Republican lawmakers have spoken out against the treaty, suggesting it would infringe on US sovereignty or allow the state to dictate the actions of families with children with disabilities.

Senator Jon Kyl, a retiring Republican, said he objected to the "disability diplomacy" that was on show with the treaty, saying there was no need for the country with the world's best record on disability rights to sign a pact that made no changes to US law and was "not enforceable" in any event.

Colombia peace talks to resume in wake of rebel deaths

HAVANA (AFP) - Colombia will resume peace talks with the FARC today with tensions on the rise after government forces killed at least 20 rebels at the weekend and President Juan Santos issued a 12-month deadline.

The dialogue is being held in Cuba and is the fourth attempt to end a conflict that has lasted almost half a century, leaving 600,000 dead, 15,000 missing and four million displaced.

The FARC delegation has accused the government of "political incongruity" for refusing to join the leftist rebels

in declaring a ceasefire during the latest peace effort, which is restarting in Havana after a five day break.

FARC negotiator Andres Paris suggested that the government, by not matching the guerrillas' ceasefire, was not doing enough to pursue peace, and said that although there had been some rebel violence, the incidents were minor.

Santos upped the stakes with the FARC on Sunday when he warned that the peace process should take months, rather than years, and said an agreement to end hostilities should be reached by November 2013.



NEW YORK- Debris is viewed outside of destroyed homes in the Breezy Point neighborhood of the Queens borough of New York City. Breezy Point, home to many New York City firefighters and police, lost 111 homes in a fast moving fire during Superstorm Sandy with many more homes severely damaged from flooding. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo went to Washington on Monday to request \$42 billion in Sandy relief from the federal government. Included in the request is \$9 billion to help New York prepare for the next big storm. (AFP)



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NATO approves Patriot missiles for Turkey

BRUSSELS (AFP) - NATO yesterday approved member Turkey's request for Patriot missiles to defend its border against Syria following a series of blunt warnings to Damascus not to use chemical weapons.

"NATO has agreed to augment Turkey's air defence capabilities in order to defend the population and territory of Turkey and to contribute to the de-escalation of the crisis along the alliance's border," a NATO statement said.

NATO head Anders Fogh Rasmussen said the decision reflected a "steadfast commitment" to preserving the security of member states.

"We say to anyone who would want to attack Turkey -- don't even think about it," he remarked, announcing the decision taken by the 28-member alliance after the first day of a two-day meeting in Brussels.

Germany, the Netherlands

and the United States have agreed to provide the Patriot missile batteries, which would come under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), the statement said.

Stressing that the Patriot system was purely defensive, Rasmussen said technical discussions would now follow about how many of the US-made Patriots would be deployed and where.

The NATO discussions came amid reports that Syria is moving chemical weapons as President Bashar al-Assad fights rebels seeking to oust him.

"NATO members expressed grave concerns about reports that the Syrian regime is considering the use of chemical weapons. Any such action would be completely unacceptable and a clear breach of international law," Rasmussen said.

Earlier he had joined US President Barack Obama in warning Assad against using chemical weapons, saying it "would be completely unacceptable to the whole international community and I would expect an immediate reaction from the international community."

Turkey welcomed NATO's decision, and reiterated that the weapons are solely for defensive purposes.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday Israel is closely tracking developments relating to chemical weapons in Syria, whose regime has been warned against using them in the country's uprising.

"Along with the international community, we are closely following developments in Syria related to its chemical weapons stockpiles," Netanyahu said.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN: Syria conflict upsurge hampering food aid

ROME (AFP) - The UN's World Food Program warned yesterday an escalation in the conflict in Syria was making it harder to send aid around the war-torn country and had forced it to suspend monitoring missions.

"Road access to and from Damascus has become more dangerous, making it difficult to dispatch food from WFP warehouses to some parts of the country -- particularly the north," the Rome-based UN aid agency said in a statement.

WFP said it had registered a rise in "indiscriminate attacks on its trucks in different parts of the country," adding that it was suspending all field missions to monitor food distribution because of the increased dangers.

Following a UN decision to reduce international staff in Syria announced on Monday, WFP said it was transferring

seven non-essential staff to Jordan.

Around 20 international and 100 local WFP staff will remain in Syria.

The agency said that the food security situation for many Syrians was "rapidly deteriorating" with a sharp rise in bread and fuel shortages, as well as increased demand from the upsurge in internally displaced people.

Food prices have doubled in the areas worst affected by the conflict like the governorate of Aleppo and access to the market is limited, WFP said.

It added that the situation was particularly serious for families taking refuge in schools and public buildings with no cooking facilities.

The agency said it was managing to reach around 1.5 million people.

Egypt opposition to march on presidential palace



CAIRO - Opponents of Islamist President Mohamed Morsi yesterday marched to the presidential palace to protest his power grab and a controversial draft charter, as the country plunged deeper into crisis. A November 22 decree issued by Morsi expanding his powers and enabling him to put to a December 15 referendum a draft constitution — rejected by liberals, leftists and Christians — has sparked strikes and deadly protests. Independent and opposition newspapers refused to publish their Tuesday editions in protest at the lack of press freedom in the constitution.

Merkel vows to steer Germany through rough seas ahead

HANOVER (AFP) - Chancellor Angela Merkel triumphantly kicked off her bid for a third term in power yesterday, saying only she could steer Germany through turbulence at home and abroad.

Touting her government as the best in two decades, Merkel, who has led Germany since 2005, won record backing among members of her conservative party in her re-election to party head.

"These are turbulent times and sometimes we even find ourselves in rough, stormy seas," she told around 1,000 delegates at a party congress of her Christian Democratic



Union (CDU).

"But it's Germany's CDU which is safely leading and steering our country through this sea and with a clear compass," she said in an address lasting around one hour.

Fugitive McAfee seeks asylum in Guatemala

GUATEMALA CITY (AFP) - American Internet pioneer John McAfee, wanted for questioning over the murder of his neighbor last month in Belize, is seeking political asylum in Guatemala, his lawyer said yesterday.

McAfee, 67, amassed huge wealth as a Silicon Valley entrepreneur in the 1990s, designing the hugely popular anti-virus software that bears his name and remains a leading industry product to this day.

In a plotline worthy of a Hollywood thriller, the multi-millionaire went on the run from his home on the idyllic Belize paradise island of Ambergris Caye hours after neighbor Gregory Faull was murdered on November 11.

With his 20-year-old girlfriend Sam Vanegas in tow, he managed to cross the border into Guatemala over the weekend and has secured the services of star lawyer Telesforo Guerra, a former Guatemalan attorney general.

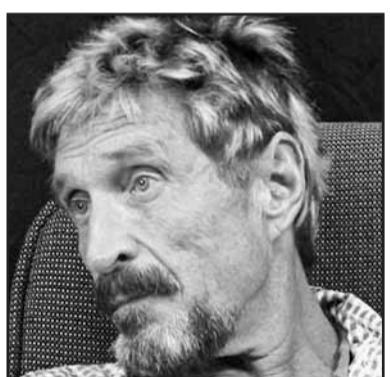
"I have to manage his political asylum," Guerra told AFP after meeting McAfee early yesterday. He "is persecuted in Belize, persecuted politically

because he stopped financing the government. They accuse him of a common crime. So what I have to obtain is an authorization of asylum," the lawyer said.

McAfee, who maintains his innocence, has left a confusing and often contradictory trail of information about his life on the run on his blog, whoismcafee.com.

Before fleeing south into Guatemala, he put out a false report saying he had been captured near the northern Mexican border and claimed to have sent a "double" with a North Korean passport to Mexico as another decoy.

Internet users tracked a photo from a magazine on Monday to Guatemala, but



McAfee initially claimed to have encrypted it to throw police off the scent.

Belize Prime Minister Dean Barrow has described McAfee as "bonkers," saying he is only wanted for questioning as a "person of interest" in the case and urging him to give himself up.



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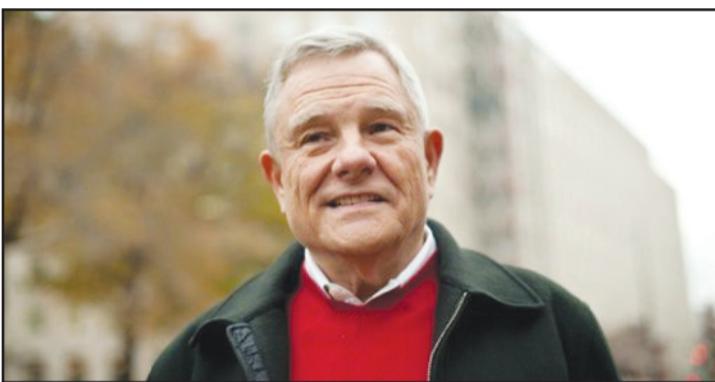
Activist discusses challenge of growing old with HIV

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Old age comes faster and hits harder for those infected with HIV, a fact aging health activist Ron Swanda knows all too well.

Swanda, 66, diagnosed as HIV-positive in 1989, takes six different drugs to keep his illness in check and to treat a litany of physical complaints from cardiovascular disease to depression.

He knows he is lucky to be alive, having lost many loved ones to AIDS, which is caused by HIV, over the years.

And while the advent of antiretroviral treatments in 1996 changed an HIV diagnosis



from a death sentence to that of a chronic, managed disease, Swanda said the long-term effects of living with the virus -- and with the drugs that keep it in check -- are still being uncovered.

Anthony Fauci, a highly regarded expert in the area of AIDS treatment, noted that "the good news is that people who are infected with HIV, with antiretroviral drugs their projected life span is essentially approaching normal."

On the other hand, he said, doctors have noticed that many common diseases of old age "tend to occur with a greater frequency in people who have been HIV infected for a long period of time."

The virus appears to send the immune system into overdrive, and "when the immune system is chronically activated, essentially all the time, that leads to that deleterious effect of promoting the aging process," explained the doctor, who heads the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), the federal health institute responsible for AIDS research.

From outward appearances, Swanda -- trim and fit-looking -- is the picture of health. But the longtime gay activist, who works in Washington with other HIV-positive senior citizens, said he feels older than his years.

"For instance, I got cataracts at 66 years old. My mother got cataracts when she was 76 years old," said Swanda, a volunteer with the National Association of People with AIDS.

He also suffers from high blood pressure, is in the early stages of heart disease and osteoporosis, and has been diagnosed with "pre-diabetic" symptoms.

Depression also seems to be a common ailment for those living with HIV.

"I think almost everybody with HIV is taking anti-depression medication of some sort," Swanda said.

Meanwhile, the antiretroviral drugs on which Swanda depends to keep his HIV in check cost an exorbitant \$1,800 per month. Although health insurance covers 90 percent of the cost, he still has to dig into his pocket to pay \$4,700 each year.

And the high price tag appears to be only one of the costs associated with taking the powerful drugs over decades, said Swanda.

He suffers from high cholesterol -- a known side effect of the HIV-fighting antiretroviral medication.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that by 2015, nearly half the people with HIV will be aged 50 or older, and that a growing number of people are getting infected with the virus when they are over the age of 50.



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Hyperemesis gravidarum: no ordinary morning sickness

LONDON (AFP) - For anyone who has had hyperemesis gravidarum, the pregnancy-induced vomiting that has caused Prince William's wife Kate to be hospitalised, the term "morning sickness" is way off the mark.

"When you're vomiting 30 to 40 times a day and admitted to hospital, it's a completely different complication of pregnancy," said Rachel Treagust, 28, who suffered from HG, as it is known, with all three of her children.

She told AFP she was "literally bed-bound, in the dark, no TV, no smells or food around, you can't even swallow your own saliva, that's how horrific it is".

Morning sickness -- formally called nausea and vomiting in pregnancy -- affects around 30 percent of women in early pregnancy, according to Britain's Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

But only about one in 200 pregnant women is affected by a severe form known by the Latin term of hyperemesis gravidarum, according to the state-run National Health Service.

Hospitalisation is needed in severe cases to treat dehydration with intravenous fluids for a few days, as it is impossible to keep fluids down.

Treagust suffered in silence with her first child, a boy, but with her second, a girl, she was



admitted to hospital several times.

She was put on a drip and given intravenous anti-sickness drugs and steroids, which improved her condition. But she said it wasn't long before she would get ill once again and have to go back into hospital.

"It's like a cycle," she said. Her condition generally improved four to five months into her pregnancies, but it wasn't until she gave birth that it completely cleared up.

She said one of the worst things was lack of knowledge about the illness.

Hormonal changes in the first 12 weeks are considered the likely cause of morning sickness, and the symptoms can occur day or night.

"Symptoms (of hyperemesis gravidarum) can include persistent vomiting, dehydration, tiredness and dizziness," said Daghni Rajasingam, consultant obstetrician and spokeswoman for the Royal College.

Sasaki Apartments

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Patriots: The 'hit-to-kill' star missiles of the US armoury



BRUSSELS (AFP) - "Hit-to-Kill" Patriot missiles set to be deployed on the Turkish-Syrian border are a sophisticated anti-ballistic defence system developed by arms manufacturer Lockheed Martin for the US Army.

Dubbed by its US manufacturers as "the world's most advanced, capable, and powerful terminal air defense missile," the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) is said to take out cruise and ballistic missiles as well as aircraft.

But it is designed as a purely defensive system, NATO chief Anders Fogh

Rasmussen stressed Tuesday as the North Atlantic alliance approved Turkey's request to station several batteries along its volatile border with Syria.

The system has been adopted by several countries, and United States, Germany and the Netherlands have agreed to contribute to the patriot deployment, NATO said in a statement.

But the number of batteries, as well as their precise location, has yet to be decided and will be determined following the results of a site survey in Turkey and after consultations and decisions by each contributing country.

The missiles were first conceived of in the 1960s at the height of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union but only entered service in the 1980s.

The PAC-3 is the latest generation, with 16 missiles loaded onto a single launcher compared with four of the previous PAC-2 generation.

The Patriot -- 'Phased Array Tracking Radar to Intercept on Target' -- came into its own during the 1991 Gulf War when they were deployed in the Gulf to protect allies and US forces from Iraqi Scud missiles -- their boxy launch units became instantly recognisable in TV images of the conflict.

A high-velocity missile, the PAC-3 destroys incoming targets by directly smashing into them, "defeating enemy target by direct body-to-body contact," Lockheed Martin says on its website.

They speed towards an impact point calculated before their launch by a sophisticated radar and tracking system on the ground. But they can be re-directed once launched thanks to an on-board guidance system.

The time from launch to point of impact is usually only between a minute to 90 seconds.

NATO foreign ministers meeting Brussels agreed Tuesday to deploy Patriots along the 800-kilometre (500-mile) border with Syria after a series of strikes by Syrian artillery fire in recent months.

It will still take several weeks for them to be installed but the system is designed so that contributions from various countries are inter-operable.



MANILA (AFP) - Typhoon Bopha setting off a mudslide killed 52 people in one hard-hit Philippine town Tuesday, local television station ABS-CBN reported from the scene. Neither the civil defence office in Manila nor the armed forces could give official confirmation of the 43 reported deaths, saying their rescuers were having a hard time reaching the remote The military said a landslide destroyed a Philippine Army patrol base in a mountainous area of the town, while a local official said an army truck laden with soldiers and civilians was swept away in a flash flood.



PARIS (AFP): A man wears a prototype of a display device helmet called "FlyViz", on December 4, 2012, during its presentation at the French public research centre INRIA headquarters in Paris. This prototype enables for the first time humans to experience a real-time 360° vision of their surroundings.

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Finance**Switzerland, US strike pact against tax evasion**

GENEVA (AFP) - Switzerland has signed a deal against tax evasion with the United States, Bern said yesterday, effectively raising pressure on Swiss banks to hand over information about US nationals with assets here.

The agreement, signed Monday in Washington, will bring Switzerland in line with the US Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), a source of dispute between both countries since it was announced in March 2010.

It "requires that foreign financial institutions reach an agreement with US tax authorities in which they are obliged to transfer information about identified US accounts," Switzerland's Federal Department of Finance said in a statement.

Under FATCA legislation, banks that fail to share information with Washington if they do not have the authorisation of the account holder must charge a 30-percent withholding tax on US clients' assets, the statement continued.

Before the pact passes into law -- most likely on January 1, 2014 -- it must be approved by Switzerland's Federal Council on January 9, and then by the country's parliament later in the year.

The Swiss announcement follows a joint declaration in

July by Washington and five other European countries -- Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain -- that they had agreed to fight offshore tax evasion through automatic information exchanges.

The FATCA law is controversial in many countries because it requires banks to reveal information about their clients.

Until now, tax agreements have only provided for the exchange of information "on demand," meaning a country would already suspect possible tax evasion before requesting the information.

Two senior US Democratic senators, Dick Durbin and Carl Levin, say tax-haven abuse costs US taxpayers an estimated \$100 billion a year in lost revenue.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

Daily Exchange Rates				
Current as of: 12/04/2012	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.81
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.91
Switzerland	CHF	191.98	192.70	193.50
Netherlands	EUR	231.07	233.18	235.52
Sweden	SEK	26.05	26.77	27.57
Denmark	DKK	30.29	31.01	31.81
Norway	NOK	30.78	31.50	32.30
Japan (per 10,000)	JPY	215.39	217.35	219.54

All rates for amounts up to AWG 100.00 per item.

Obama to Republicans : raise taxes on rich or no deal

WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama warned Republicans yesterday there would be no deal on averting a potentially disastrous fiscal crisis without them caving in to his demand to raise tax rates on the rich.

But in an interview with Bloomberg TV, Obama offered a hint of wiggle room, declining to state that the top income tax rate must go up and permanently remain at the 39.6 percent level seen under the Clinton administration.

"We have the potential of getting a deal done," Obama said, adding that Republican proposals to close loopholes and cap deductions would not produce sufficient revenue to make a serious cut in the deficit.

"We're going to have to see the rates on the top two percent go up and we're not going to be able to get a deal without it," Obama said.

If Obama and Republicans cannot get a deal, George W. Bush-era tax cuts on all Americans will expire on January 1,

at the same time as huge automatic spending cuts come into force, likely throwing the economy into recession.

Obama wants to extend tax cuts for most people, but raise rates on the richest two percent of Americans. Republicans want to extend all tax cuts for a year, then discuss spending cuts and tax reform to produce more revenues.

The president campaigned for re-election on the basis of raising taxes on the wealthiest Americans, while Republicans, though open to raising more revenue, refuse to do so by raising marginal tax rates.

"Let's let the tax rates on the upper income folks go up," Obama told Bloomberg, arguing that there was no time before the deadline to work out comprehensive reform on taxes and social programs that Republicans want.

"Then let's set up a process with a time certain at the end of 2013 or the fall of 2013 where we work on tax reform (where) we look at what loopholes and deductions both De-

mocrats and Republicans are willing to close.

"It's possible we may be able to lower rates by broadening the base at that point."

Obama noticeably did not commit himself to a specific top tax rate for the wealthiest Americans -- which he defines as individuals earning \$200,000 or families making \$250,000 a year -- either this year, or next.

Some analysts believe that the crisis over the so-called "fiscal cliff" could be defused by Republicans agreeing to raise the top tax rate, but to a point some way short of the Clinton-era rate.

Obama in return could offer cuts in entitlement spending and allow the closure of some tax loopholes to raise further revenue.

White House spokesman Jay Carney was later repeatedly pressed on whether Obama would draw a line in the sand and insist that tax rates for the rich must return to the 39.6 percent level permanently.

"It is his position that he will not sign an extension of the Bush-era tax cuts for wealthy Americans," Carney said.

"Those tax cuts have rates for top earners at 35 percent, and if you do not sign an extension, the rates go back up to 39, the top rate," he said.

Global shipping hits record volume as prices fall

GENEVA (AFP) - International shipping volumes gained 4.0 percent in 2011 to a record 8.7 billion tons even as prices fell sharply owing to surplus capacity, a United Nations think tank said yesterday.

Despite increasing demand, "world ship supply capacity expanded much faster, at a rate of 10 percent, reaching for the first time a total of 1.5 billion deadweight tons," the UN's Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) Review of Maritime Transport 2011 explained.

The indicators are important because about 80 percent of global trade is transported by ship, UNCTAD noted.

As an indication of the falling prices, the cost of transporting a 20-foot container from Shanghai to northern Europe plunged from \$1,789 (1,367 euros) in 2010 to \$881 in 2011, the think tank said.

The average cost of shipping a 40-foot container from Shanghai to the US West Coast fell over the same period from \$2,308 to \$1,667, according to the UN report released in Geneva.

And in a "remarkable shift" away from previous years, developing country ports took a far greater slice of the global shipping sector pie than before, UNCTAD said.

In developing countries, ports loaded 60 percent and unloaded 57 percent of world seaborne trade by volume, the report showed.

Meanwhile, in a sign of declining competition in the industry, the average number of shipping companies dropped by nearly 23 percent between 2004 and 2011, UNCTAD said.

During the same period, the size of the largest ship deployed nearly doubled, it noted.

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Bin Laden thriller wins New York critics award

NEW YORK (AFP) - The prestigious New York Film Critics Circle gave "Zero Dark Thirty," Kathryn Bigelow's thriller about the hunt for Osama bin Laden, a new shove in the direction of Oscar glory Monday.

The director of the Oscar-winning "The Hurt Locker" is quickly gathering buzz for her latest war drama, which recounts the decade-long search for the Al-Qaeda founder and his killing in Pakistan in May 2011.

The critics group named the film best of 2012 and Bigelow best director. Honors from the

NYFCC, made up of newspaper, magazine and online critics, have no direct bearing on the Academy Awards, but the extra publicity won't hurt a film that will not even open in limited release until December 19.

The group highlighted Daniel Day-Lewis in Steven Spielberg's likely Oscar contender "Lincoln" for best actor. The historical biopic also saw Sally Field winning best supporting actress and Tony Kushner best screenplay.

"Zero Dark Thirty" centers on a female CIA analyst -- played by Jessica Chastain -- credited as a key force in the

hunt for the Al-Qaeda chief, killed by US Navy SEALs in an audacious dead-of-night raid on his hiding place in Pakistan.

"Zero Dark Thirty" could well be the most impressive film Bigelow has made, as well as possibly her most personal," commented the Hollywood Reporter, after initial screenings of the movie.

Entertainment Weekly tipped it as a possible nominee for best film, best director, best screenplay and best leading actress for Chastain, who was Oscar nominated for her supporting role in last year's civil rights drama "The Help."

'Now we have a state,' Abbas says after UN vote



RAMALLAH, Palestinian Territories (AFP) - Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas returned home to a hero's welcome on Sunday after winning upgraded UN status, even as Israel imposed reprisals that UN chief Ban Ki-moon said dealt an "almost fatal blow" to any peace prospects.

"Now we have a state," Abbas told cheering crowds at his headquarters in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

"Palestine has accomplished a historic achievement at the UN," he added, three days after the United Nations General Assembly granted the Palestinians non-member state observer status in a 138-9 vote.

"The world said in a loud voice... yes to the state of Palestine, yes to Palestine's freedom, yes to Palestine's independence, no to aggression, no to settlements, no to occupation," Abbas told the ecstatic audience.

But the Palestinian UN success has not been without repercussions.

Washington has warned it could withhold funds to the already cash-strapped Palestinian Authority and Israel said on Sunday that it would not transfer millions of dollars in

tax duties it levies from the Palestinians.

UN leader Ban Ki-moon warned Sunday that any Israeli move to revive that project would deal an "almost fatal blow" to any prospects for peace.

"Settlements are illegal under international law and, should the E-1 settlement be constructed, it would represent an almost fatal blow to remaining chances of securing a two-state solution," Ban's office said in a statement.

In Ramallah, Abbas pledged that after the victory at the United Nations, his "first and most important" task would be working to achieve Palestinian unity and reconciliation between his Fatah faction and the Hamas rulers of Gaza.

The return was a moment of triumph for Abbas, who last year tried and failed to win the Palestinians full state membership at the United Nations.

The bid stalled in the Security Council, where the veto-wielding United States has vehemently opposed it.

The United States, Israel and a handful of other countries also opposed the Palestinian bid to upgrade their status to that of a non-member ob-

server state, but with no vetoes available in the General Assembly, the measure easily passed.

The move gives the Palestinians access to a range of international institutions, including potentially the International Criminal Court, and raises their international profile after years of stalled peace talks with Israel.

Abbas was received with a full honour guard, descending from his car to walk along a red carpet at the Ramallah presidential headquarters known as the Muqataa, where he shook hands with waiting dignitaries.

Abbas's return drew supporters from across the West Bank.



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'Twilight' clings to top N. America box office slot

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - The final "Twilight" vampire movie held on for a third week to the top spot at the North America box office, narrowly holding off the latest James Bond effort, figures released Monday showed.

"The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn, Part 2," the fifth and final installment of the wildly popular series, took in \$17.4 million, said industry tracker Exhibitor Relations, pushing the film's three-week total past \$254 million.

The previous four films, based on novels by Stephenie Meyer and starting in 2008, earned a colossal \$2.4 billion.

In second spot was the Bond movie "Skyfall," which earned \$16.6 million on its fourth weekend -- it has grossed more than \$245 million since its US opening.



SYDNEY (AFP) - John Travolta and his "Grease" on-screen love Olivia Newton-John have recorded together for the first time in 30 years, making a Christmas album honouring the US star's late son Jett. Speaking to Australia's Fairfax Media via telephone on Tuesday, the pair said they had remained close friends since their roles as Danny and Sandy in the musical hit and were delighted to be working together again. Their new album, "This Christmas", includes a song by John Farrar, who wrote their famous pop duet "You're the One That I Want". The video for the new song will have its global release on today. Proceeds from the album, which also features Barbra Streisand, Tony Bennett and James Taylor as guest artists, will go towards the Jett Travolta Foundation and the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre in Melbourne. Jett Travolta died in 2009 aged 16 after suffering a seizure and his father said Christmas can be a difficult time for his family.

Almost tied in third were "Rise of the Guardians," DreamWorks's latest animated offering featuring Jack Frost, and Steven Spielberg's "Lincoln," starring Daniel Day-Lewis, each with a whisker under \$13.4 million.

Day-Lewis has been tipped as a likely Oscar nominee for his portrayal of Abraham Lincoln in the critically-acclaimed biopic of the assassinated 16th president of the United States.

Holding on to fifth place, 3D fantasy "Life of Pi" by Oscar-winning Taiwanese-American director Ang Lee, based on a Booker prize-winning novel about an Indian boy adrift on a lifeboat in the Pacific, earned \$12.2 million.

In sixth place was "Wreck-It Ralph," the Disney film about a video game villain aspiring to be a hero, at \$6.9 million.

It was followed closely by new entry "Killing Them Softly," starring Hollywood A-lister Brad Pitt as a mob enforcer, which took in a disappointing \$6.8 million.

In eighth place was "Red Dawn," an updated take on a 1984 movie, about a group of teenagers who look to save their town from an invasion of North Korean soldiers. It took in \$6.5 million.

And at number nine was "Flight," starring Denzel Washington, who is also drawing Oscar buzz for his role as a crash-landing hero pilot with drink and drug problems. It pulled in \$4.5 million.

Rounding out the top 10 was horror flick "The Collection," about a man who escapes the vicious grip of a serial killer and is blackmailed to rescue a girl from the killer's clutches, which debuted with \$3.1 million in ticket sales.

La Linda Department Store-where Aruba shops!



Calman and Anna Hochman

Though Aruba has its share of designer brand stores and shopping malls, ask almost any islander where they shop, and they will likely tell you "La Linda." Spread out over several specialty stores on the Caya Betico Croes, La Linda was Aruba's first and foremost department stores, where, for decades, one could find anything and everything, and after more than 70 years, still can

make that claim.

It is also a distinctly family operation, with the personal touch and supervision of the Hochmans, who take their reputation for stocking "the best quality for the best price" very seriously. It all started with Calman Hochman, a Jewish Polish immigrant who opened his first small shop with his Aruban wife Anna, carrying "a little bit of everything that anyone could need." This was before WWII, when the present head of the company, Jaime, hadn't even been born yet. Many of their sales

help have also been with the store for over two decades, and "it is very much like family here," he admits. Their loyal patrons also look forward to being helped by shop girls who have become friends, knowing they will get great and honest service.

To this day, La Linda is particularly known for its huge fabrics and notions department, the first destination for

many on an island where making your own clothes is still an everyday practice. Without question, the store offers the greatest diversity of selection in nearly every department, and they have now consolidated them all into one store; four floors containing a wealth

wares, bedding, sporting goods, luggage, shoes, jewelry, decorative items and more.

"The present store is a work in progress," asserts Jaime, as they continue to renovate and enlarge what had been only the men's store and warehouse in the past. Normally closed for a

find it open daily for the entire day, from 9:30 AM to 6:30 PM, as they are on Saturday's, with a bright, charming eatery installed on the top floor.

La Linda is continually expanding their inventory, with their acquisitions department continually seeking out interesting, unique, and moderately priced goods from all over the world, always with an eye towards quality. They pay particular attention to their Women's Department specializing in over-sized garments, stocking larger sizes exhibiting distinctive dash and style.

For travelers who have perhaps lost their luggage, they can offer a quick fix for all the family which won't break your budget, including some very stylish new suitcases.

A visit to La Linda and perusal of their interesting collection will make anyone understand why it has remained successful all these decades, and is still Aruba's favorite place to shop!



Unique, quality goods in all departments

of choices in clothing for men, women and children, house

2 hour lunch/siesta in the old island way, shoppers will soon

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded get-



away; we are very pleased by

the response to our concept." Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community

of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facil-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated with Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

SPORTS

India suspended from IOC

PARIS (AFP) - India has been suspended from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) because of its stance of electing tainted officials, a source in the body confirmed to AFP Tuesday.

Asked whether members of the IOC's executive committee had confirmed the south Asian giant's suspension for flouting the Olympic charter, the source said by text message: "It's official."

Suspension from IOC membership means India will not receive IOC funding and its officials would be banned from attending Olympic meetings and events.

India's athletes would also be barred from competing in the Olympics under the national flag, although the IOC could allow some to take part under the Olympic flag.

The suspension comes amid an ongoing row between the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the IOC over the election procedure for top posts in the national organisation due to be held today.

A New Delhi court directed the faction-ridden IOA to hold the vote according to the government's sports code but the IOC wanted it to abide by the Olympic charter that favours autonomy.

Lalit Bhanot, who is out on bail after spending 11 months in custody last year on corruption charges linked to the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, was expected to be elected unopposed to the post of secretary-general.

The new IOA president was expected to be Abhey Singh Chautala, who has close links to former incumbent Suresh Kalmadi, who is also on bail over corruption charges linked to the Commonwealth Games.

The IOC Ethics Commission in October warned India against fielding either Bhanot or Kalmadi and has expressed concern over political interference.



AMRITSAR (AFP) : Argentina kabaddi player (R) is tackled by his US opponent during the 3rd Pearls World Cup Kabaddi Punjab-2012 tournament at Guru Nanak Stadium in Amritsar yesterday. US won the match with a score of 77-14. Kabaddi, a team sport which originated in the Indian sub-continent, involves team members making 'raids' into the opposing team's territory on a playing field in an attempt to 'tag' opponents while holding one's breath and chanting the word 'kabaddi'.



Argentina kabaddi player (C) is confronted by his US opponents. *Kabaddi* is a team sport of Asian origin, where two teams occupy opposite halves of a small field and take turns sending a "raider" into the other half, in order to win points by tackling members of the opposing team; then the raider tries to return to his own half, holding his breath and chanting the word "Kabaddi" during the whole raid. The raider must not cross the lobby unless he touches any of his opponents. If he does so then he will be declared as "out". There is also a bonus line which ensure extra points for the raider if he manages to touch it and return to his side of the field successfully. In the international team version of kabaddi, two teams of seven members each occupy opposite halves of a field.

Champions League: Montpellier - FC Schalke 04



Montpellier's Cameroonian defender Henri Bedimo (R) vies for the ball with Schalke's Romanian forward Ciprian Marica (L). A 1-1 draw against Montpellier HSC at the Stade la Mosson was enough to see Schalke 04 finish top of Group B.

Real Madrid hit four as Ajax crumble

MADRID (AFP) - Real Madrid made light work of Ajax with an emphatic 4-1 win on Tuesday, but still had to settle for second place in Champions League Group D.

Goals from Cristiano Ronaldo, Kaka and a Jose Callejon double in the Santiago Bernabeu sealed the Spanish champions' victory, but top spot in the group went to Borussia Dortmund who beat Manchester City 1-0.

Derk Boerrigter got the consolation for the Dutch who gave a good account of themselves and their reward is a place in the Europa League after finishing third ahead of

Manchester City, who came a miserable last.

Real took advantage of having already qualified to rest a number of first team players.



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Boxing: Japan's Kameda defends WBA bantamweight title

OSAKA, Japan (AFP) - Title holder Koki Kameda of Japan beat interim champion Hugo Ruiz of Mexico by a split decision in a unification bout for the World Boxing Association (WBA) bantamweight title on Tuesday.

Two judges scored it 116-113 and 115-113 in favour of the Japanese southpaw, while the other judge counted it 117-113 for the hard-hitting Mexican.

It was Kameda's fifth defence of the belt since winning the vacant title when he beat Alexander Munoz of Venezuela in December 2010, stretching his record to 29 wins, including 17 KOs,



against one defeat.

Kameda is the oldest of a trio of boxing brothers who have bad-boy images in the media and among boxing fans.

Second brother Daiki was suspended from boxing for a year after his failed title bid against then World Boxing Commission flyweight champion Daisuke Naito in October 2007 for using dirty tactics.

Koki Kameda was reprimanded by the Japan Boxing

Commission for urging his brother to fight dirty.

Their father, Shiro Kameda, has been barred by the WBC from serving as a cornerman in its matches for abusing officials and has been slapped with a life ban by Japan's boxing authority.

The 26-year-old Ruiz saw his record reduced to 31 wins, including 28 KOs against two defeats.

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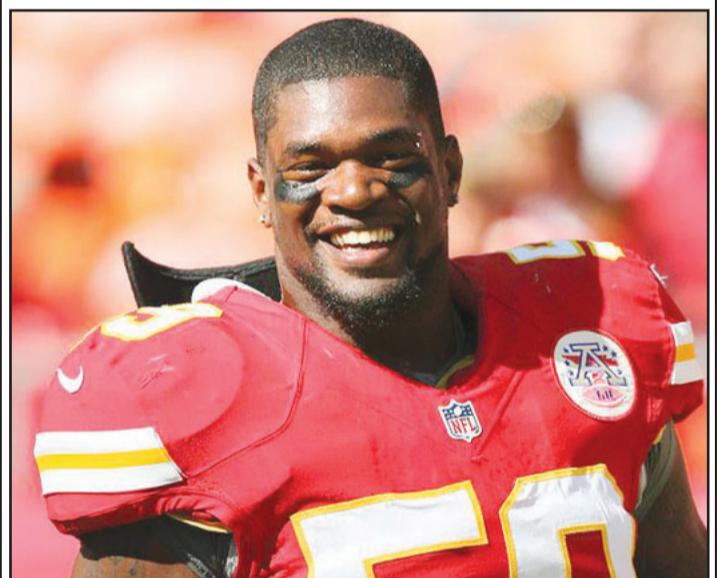
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High school basketball star dies on court



LITTLE SILVER -- A high school basketball player in New Jersey suddenly collapsed on the court and died Monday. Albert Martin, 17, a Red Bank Regional High School senior, died at Riverview Medical Center Monday after collapsing during a basketball scrimmage against Point Pleasant Beach High School. Red Bank Regional boys basketball Coach Scott Martin said that the 6-foot-3, 220-pound Martin had passed a physical recently to play basketball this season and, as far as he knew, didn't have a history of seizures. The coach also said there was a defibrillator on site at the time of his collapse.

Jovan Belcher's last moments



KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- Investigators believe stress from their relationship, financial problems and alcohol factored into the Jovan Belcher murder-suicide, a Kansas City police source said Tuesday. Belcher, a West Babylon native and Kansas City Chiefs linebacker, knelt down, kissed his slain girlfriend on the forehead, and said, "I'm sorry," police said, referring to an account given by Belcher's mom, who encountered the couple in the master bedroom Saturday morning after hearing gunshots. Then, Belcher gave a goodbye kiss to the three-month-old daughter he had with Kasandra Perkins, apologized to his mom, and drove his Bentley to Arrowhead Stadium, where he told Chiefs coach Romeo Crennell and other team officials "I killed her" before fatally shooting himself in the head, a Kansas City Police Department spokesman said Tuesday.

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NFL: Griffin helps Redskins beat Giants



Quarterback Robert Griffin III #10 of the Washington Redskins runs the ball between Stevie Brown #27 and Prince Amukamara #20 of the New York Giants

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Washington Redskins moved another step closer to first place New York Monday night, defeating the Giants 17-16 behind a fourth quarter touchdown pass from rookie quarterback Robert Griffin.

New York (7-5) now have a slim one-game lead in the NFC East division over Washington who are tied for second with the Dallas Cowboys at 6-6. Dallas defeated the Philadelphia Eagles on Sunday night.

"We knew three weeks ago that every game we played was going to be like a playoff

game," said Washington head coach Mike Shanahan.

Griffin passed for 163 yards on 13-of-21 attempts and added 72 yards on five carries as Washington won its third consecutive game.

Alfred Morris rushed the ball 22 times for 124 yards while Pierre Garcon grabbed eight passes for 106 yards and a touchdown at FedEx Field.

New York quarterback Eli Manning was 20-for-33 with 280 yards and a touchdown and Martellus Bennett recorded five catches for 82 yards and a touchdown for the Giants, who have lost three of

their last four contests.

Ahmad Bradshaw earned 103 yards on 24 carries and Victor Cruz caught five passes for 104 yards in the loss.

The Giants led 13-10 at halftime and then tacked on three more points when Lawrence Tynes nailed a 35-yard field goal with just over three minutes left in the third quarter.

Garcon caught an eight yard touchdown pass from Griffin with 11:31 left in the game to give the Redskins a 17-16 lead and the victory.

Rory McIlroy wins PGA's player of the year; John Huh earns rookie honors



--McIlroy was the runaway favorite to snag this award and become the youngest to win it since Tiger Woods did so in 1998, and it's another big accomplishment that McIlroy can check off in his young career.

McIlroy had four wins this year on tour, more than anyone else, and that total included a major championship when he ran away with the PGA Championship at Kiawah Island. On top of that, McIlroy won the money title and the Vardon Trophy and had 10 top-10 finishes on tour, tied for most with Bo Van Pelt.

McIlroy started his season with a loss in the finals of the Accenture Match Play. After holding off Woods at the Honda Classic for his first win

of the year, he finished third at the WGC-Cadillac Championship. A disappointing weekend at the Masters left another year without a green jacket added to his closet, but he bounced back with a playoff loss to Rickie Fowler at the Wells Fargo Championship before going through a bit of a midseason slump.

John Huh picked up Rookie of the Year honors thanks in large part to his playoff win at the Mayakoba Golf Classic, where the 22-year-old had to beat veteran Robert Allenby in an eight-hole playoff. Huh's season was so solid that he landed a spot throughout the FedEx Cup playoffs, finding himself at the Tour Championship and followed that up with two top-26 finishes in Fall Series events.

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